

WCPCG-2011

Villarino and his work "way to exams the talents for the application to the study": A precursor of the Spanish educational guidance in the Sixteenth Century

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Abstract

This article analyzes the manuscript manual entitled "way to exams the talents for the application to the study" the doctor from Zaragoza Francisco Villarino. In its content can conclude that is a real precedent for educational guidance thriving Spanish and European Humanism. Unlike other physicians of the time they addressed this issue, the author of the manuscript is placed in perspective and very different starting design. Implies a rejection of naturalistic and deterministic approach had its roots in Galen of Pérgamo, and would be summed up brilliantly by the Spanish physician Juan Huarte. In the approach of Villarino will derive far-reaching educational implications that allow great latitude to educational guidance.

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Selection and/or peer-review under responsibility of the 2nd World Conference on Psychology, Counselling and Guidance.

Keywords: Pioneers of educational guidance, Humanism Spanish physician, biological determinism;

1. Introduction

In this research, we get to light an unpublished manuscript of the Sixteenth Century, that is the way to exams the different "natural talents" for the choice of studies and faculties. It has been located in the National Library of Madrid in the collection of manuscript books originally built for rare, curious and lost books (National Library of Madrid, MSS. 2269). It is a true pioneer and landmark "scientific" about educational guidance. His author, Francisco Diez Villarino, was a contemporary doctor Juan Huarte, which is also in the Hippocratic-Galenic renewed current for study of the humours in Renaissance and Humanism, but from a different conceptual prism.

Dr. Villarino opposes the controversial thesis Huarte, as the deterministic conception of free will and the understanding as organic power. Villarino, go shelling, point by point differences with Huarte, especially in his second treatise, but in this article will examine the contribution of the first treaty. Dr. Villarino approaches have great impact on confidence and given opportunities to education and the concept and relative weight of biological determinism (Rey, 1983).

His work is definitely a very good critical manual to budgets of Huarte and the Hippocratic tradition of naturalistic of Galeno, which raises some issues of great concern for educational guidance. The manuscript treatise that we have been pointing was never printed; this fact may be related to approaches "unnatural" defended. Also the

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fundamental contents of this manual, as we shall see, are a fruitful contribution to the history of educational guidance and provide an alternative method to examine the "natural" or "talents" for the appropriate choice of studies.

2. The Manuscript and its contests

This document manuscript was lost for a long time before joining the National Library of Madrid, taking a long journey for various civil and ecclesiastical institutions. Thanks to the chronicler of Aragon, Juan Francisco Andres de Uztarroz, which is mentioned in the collection of documents for the preparation of his drafts of Aragonese writers and researchers like Hernandez and Chinchilla, we know of its existence (Hernández & Chinchilla, 1845). Its location opens a new door for the study of the historical setting of precedents of educational guidance in Spain.

The Villarino's manuscript book consists in fact of three distinct parts or treatises. The first is strictly a manual on the "way to exams the talents for the application to the study". It ranges from the first page to 34v°, and may be labeled without doubt, like a veritable treatise on educational guidance, in the same style and composition that John Huarte.

In the second part, it is reviewed in depth the book "exams of talents for the sciences" of Juan Huarte, getting an overview of the most controversial thesis and other matters of interest that have some involvement in education. Thus, it is refuted many of the approaches of Huarte with arguments of various types. This part is profuse and widely extends from page 35r° to 164r°.

The third part presents the ideas of the Jesuit Father Antonio Possevino for examination of the talents and its pedagogical applications according to the humoral conception, but from a clearly anti-naturalistic position. This part extends from page 164v° to the end. The Villarino's objective in this document to include it in the manuscript was to strengthen the main theses and arguments in his treatise "way to exams the talents for the application to the study". This work divided its content into 20 sections (Granda, 1945). A descriptive and summarizing version of the titles is the following:

- *The opinion of the philosophers of antiquity on the nature of happiness*
- *The errors of ancient authors about the way to happiness*
- *The measures and precautions that students should consider before starting their studies*
- *On the need to study the complexion or appearance of the student before starting any faculty or art*
- *The poor or no credibility judgments astrological elements to determine the talent of the students*
- *The type of temperament as real cause of the talent*
- *Actual method for determining the ingenuity coupled to various types of understanding*
- *The underlying causes of good and bad talents*
- *The particular characteristics that define the various talents and its relationship with the three powers of the "soul": memory, intellect and will.*
- *On the vices and evils that can hold the "rational soul"*
- *The characteristics of cold and dry Temperament*
- *The cold and dry Temperament and arts faculties more akin to it*
- *Poetry as an art derived from an "imaginative" understanding*
- *Rhetoric as an art derived from the eloquence and "imaginative" understanding*
- *About the art of music and the kind of understanding more akin*
- *About the practice of medicine and the kind of understanding more akin*
- *About the government 's skills and its relation to the "imaginative" understanding*
- *About the military art and its relation to the "imaginative" understanding*
- *About learning languages and their relation to the understanding of type "memory"*
- *About the cultivation of history and its relation to the understanding of type "memory"*

So far the central concepts and issues addressed by the Villarino's new treatise in educational guidance. It shows a strong parallel with the issues addressed by Huarte in his famous book, but Villarino not renounce the orthodox and classical tripartite division of powers of the "rational soul": memory, intellect and will (Rey, 1983). We recall

that the division of soul for Huarte puts the imagination as a power with entity in itself. Instead Dr. Villarino does not give the "imaginative" a status so high but it is conceived as a tendency or inclination of understanding, and always with the assistance of the will. This has its importance and impact on the role that is given to biological determinism, and thus to education.

3. The biological antideterminist of Villarino

In the Sixteenth Century began to study the human body as a somatic stem where the entire "spiritual". That is why special importance to know the physical and mental elements that make up the human being. It starts a line of thought in the Renaissance humanism with a strong medical side. The knowledge of famous doctors and thinkers is updated as were the theories of Hippocrates, Celso, Galeno, Dioscórides and others. In this sense we can distinguish a constellation of physicians who are responsible for rescue and explain the medical knowledge of the ancients from a focus on cultural renewal innovative accent (Cárceles, 1993).

In the Sixteenth Century Spain introduces a current study of human nature that combines the emerging humanism with the basics, humoral and medical concepts from a psychosomatic perspective. The study of medicine since the ancient Hippocratic-Galenic perspective emphasized that the temperaments were dependent on body composition of individuals and the preponderance of certain moods or "body fluids". It being consistent with this last statement and expand its meaning, even each particular complexion and humoral predominance was combined intellectual connotations and specific and "moral" response. Thus, from this perspective left little room for freedom and moral responsibility for personal behavior.

Naturalistic conception of the psychophysical unity that constitutes the person has a root, a biological determinism that significantly reduces the role of free will. The central thesis of Hippocratic-Galenic court ostensibly dominates in Europe for a long time and many humanists and early sixteenth-century doctors were attached to it. Special mention must be made by Juan Huarte which is fully in this line of thought. Also it is true, that in a later edition the controversial passages were removed, probably for fear to the Inquisition (Rey, 1983).

In the line of refutation to the main thesis of Huarte and Galeno we find to Villarino. Francisco Villarino, as noted, is a prime example of the strong criticisms leveled against the work of Huarte in its pillars. Rebuttals he was subjected the work of Huarte, and with it his most influential forefathers, are grouped in the second part of Villarino manuscript entitled "Review of the book *exam of talents* of Juan Huarte". Others contemporaries' doctors of Villarino also addressed these issues but have not challenged the work of Huarte with as clearly. Humanists and medical Spanish like Francisco Vallés, Luis Mercado and others collect this climate of cultural renewal that marked the humanism in the medical knowledge of the period, identifying each with a more or less overt acceptance of budgets natural or unnatural, as the case (Cárceles 1993).

Villarino used to authority and orthodoxy of the Jesuit Father Antonio Possevino to endorse its thesis and to lend credibility to their proposals. This one, though using some of the theses of Huarte (used in Jesuit schools), rejects naturalism and biological determinism raised since ancient times by Hippocrates, Galen and other authorized medical opinion. Possevino departs from heterodoxy of Huarte giving a high value on human freedom in order to conduct and moral responsibility for our actions. The conduct, as more orthodox approaches, inexorably determined not by our physical constitution and temperament, but in some ways is given some value as an explanation of behavioral phenomena. In the sense that we have been pointing, Villarino is a strong advocate of the anti-determinist position siding with the more orthodox approaches to individual freedom and the support of "grace".

The latter probably has something to do with silencing that was subjected the thought of Villarino and it not published work in any typography, except his manual about the theory and practice of medicine "*Medendi Canonum*" in 1573 (Villarino, 1573). In this regard it should also be mentioned that some concepts discerned Villarino precursors of educational guidance long before Huarte. Specifically in the above and only published work Villarino, contained some statements and thoughts present in the work of Huarte, on the need to know the "natural" of each, in order to ascribe to similar studies that claim their talents. We recall that the first edition of the review of Huarte do not see light until 1575. The parallelism between the conceptions of Huarte and Villarino has been shown by some authors and could be the basis of anonymity that has remained until today. Moreover there are serious

doubts Huarte's work places earlier in time that this first treaty Villarino entitled "way to exams the talents for the application to the study". We do not know why left it undeveloped and unprinted.

3.1. Implications for educational guidance

The culmination of this article is the main pedagogical implications are for educational guidance approaches of Dr. Villarino. First it should be noted the large role given to the combination of individual freedom, which otherwise has a special setting and is aligned with the central thesis of scholastic theology (Massimi, 2001). In fact, if it is true that the "moral" and "intellectual" conduct and individual skills in different knowledge are determined by the predominance of a particular humor or an imbalance of "body fluids", freedom and responsibility conduct depends largely on our bodily constitution. This biological determinism root overrides the dynamic teaching that would make a more broad conception of free will. This is what makes Villarino strongly criticizing the Galenic and Huarte conceptions. The same education and educational guidance would be impossible if we look at this view as reductionist.

Regarding the specific content of the treaty that we are commenting, Villarino should be noted that once defined what constitutes true happiness, against the best-known Aristotelian view, provides the ideal training to which all students should aim. The anthropological model that provides serves as a benchmark for defining an ideal educational model, in line with budgets of more orthodox Renaissance humanism without any pedagogic naturalism dyes.

Then it set the coordinates and preconditions that a good student should consider before undertaking the study of a discipline or faculty. From here, the physician regarding the psychophysical complexion and physiognomy, are the preferred instruments that the humanist is to advise the student as the examination and evidence to show its "natural" in the initiation of the option more sympathetic.

A recurrent idea of Villarino is the resounding rejection of any astrology trial respect the birth of the student, and in no way can be accepted as a determinant of talent. Villarino believes that the causal explanatory power of talent is based on the humoral composition of the character and temperament and not the harmonious combination of the stars. The identification of the talent will build the theory of humors having a virtual teaching very sharp in the sense of predicting the future success of students in different faculties. From this perspective arbitrate an innovative design, (probably earlier than that of Juan Huarte) to determine the various talents and their proclivity to various skills and abilities.

Villarino's pedagogical theory will go through the different disciplines of the time, in conjunction with the talents. So the temperament type "imaginative" unfolds very well in subjects such as poetry, eloquence, preaching, rhetoric, music, the practice of medicine, government and skills of military command, etc. For his part, temperament type "memory" is developed very well in the domain of languages, culture history, the theory of medicine, legal issues, etc.

In his treatise might expect more attention to knowledge related to understanding "pure" as it Huarte according to its unique tripartite division of the soul (memory, understanding and imagination), but only dedicated his treatise to the disciplines involved in memory and imagination (understood as a facet of understanding), but governed by the will contest. In this latest power of the "soul" had dispensed Huarte in his book "exam of talent", taking it serious implications for the potential and possibilities of education and educational guidance.

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